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ABSTRACT

Intercollegiate competitive speech and debate is at a crossroads requiring massive reforms, or the academic exercise will lose its power to provide lasting benefits. Likewise, the scope of individual events is in a constant state of change. One constant, however, is the value of extemporaneous speaking which encompasses many of the ideals essential for a competent public speaker. Lincoln-Douglas (L-D) debates, modelled on campaign contests between Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln, are battles of logic, evidence, and verbal artistry between two individuals. Principles of persuasion are at the heart of L-D debate, and time constraints require competitors to efficiently organize and analyze the content of the round. Considering the benefits of both extemporaneous and L-D debate, the logical conclusion is to merge the two forms in a way that creates a pedagogically superior event, incorporating the limited preparation, topic choice, and research methodology of extemporaneous speaking and the time format and persuasive intent of Lincoln-Douglas debate. 1987 Pi Kappa Delta Convention and Contest Rules offer a possible foundation for extemporaneous L-D debate. (A sample ballot sheet for such a debate, and 26 notes are included.) (SG)

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A Rationale for Incorporating Extemporaneous Lincoln-Douglas Debate into Individual Events Tournaments

The philosophical underpinnings of competitive intercollegiate speech and debate have been brought into focus in recent years. A polarity has certainly emerged within the dialectic composed of those who argue for a return to traditional debating standards and those who advocate a new style of debate. Derryberry has contended that a philosophy must be centered around the "total program"[1] whereas equally compelling arguments have been made for a single-focus squad.[2] Aside from the evidence, both affirmative and negative, it is quite clear, however, that intercollegiate speech and debate is at a proverbial crossroads. Unarguably, the next few years will require massive reform or the academic exercise will lose its power to provide lasting benefits.

Likewise, the scope of individual events is in a constant state of change. Criteria for judging is as divergent as the personal tastes of those signing the ballots, and unfortunately, the lack of consistency may hinder the academic development of those competing.[3] A quick review of journal articles relating to individual events, for example, produces convincing arguments for a variety of philosophical rationales.

One constant, however, is the notion regarding the value of extemporaneous speaking.[4] Although some concern

has surfaced regarding the nature of the questions asked at tournaments, the pure academic value of the event has rarely been disputed. As such, this paper hopes to highlight one viable solution to the problems plaguing intercollegiate speech and debate by proposing a marriage between the Lincoln-Douglas style of debate and the extemporaneous speaking event.

Lincoln-Douglas Debate: Original Intent

Lincoln-Douglas debate has certainly had a difficult time finding legitimation in current intercollegiate tournament practices. The Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results (ISTR) from 1991 indicate that 60 tournaments offered Lincoln-Douglas debate compared to 239 contests offering two-person debate. Likewise, of those tournaments, the number of debate teams attending was significantly greater than the number of individuals entered in Lincoln-Douglas debate.[5] Actually, very little, if anything, has been written attempting to explain the seeming lack of interest in intercollegiate Lincoln-Douglas debate as it is currently practiced. One suggestion is that L-D rounds are hardly distinguishable from two-person contests. Regardless, forensics programs must begin to evaluate events that find little participation and make relevant changes or simply drop them from tournament competition.

Lincoln-Douglas debate, though, certainly teaches many skills worthy of practice within competitive forensics. In

the broadest sense, Lincoln-Douglas debate more closely resembles the underlying concepts enveloping the definition of debate. Founded on the example of the rhetorical campaign-contests between Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln, L-D debate is a battle of logic, evidence, and verbal artistry between two people, as opposed to two teams. As a competitive event, Lincoln-Douglas debate was introduced at the 1980 National Forensic League (NFL) National Tournament in Huntsville, Alabama,[6] and was soon added to the schedules of high school, as well as college, contests. Paramount to this discussion, however, as Maridell Fryar and David A. Thomas observe, is the notion that Lincoln-Douglas debate was created "on the principle that debate can be an oral communication event in which students learn how to speak, as well as how to do research and apply critical thinking."[7] More importantly, Fryar and Thomas further contend that competitors "will make a big mistake if they approach Lincoln-Douglas debate from the context of standard cross-examination debate as it is currently practiced."[8] Consequently, to contend that Lincoln-Douglas debate serves the same academic function as either NDT or CEDA is, at best, a misunderstanding of the creator's intent. Resulting from ignorance, misinterpretation, expediency, and even arrogance, intercollegiate speech and debate tournaments have made L-D nothing more than "one-person, two-person-debate."

What, then, makes Lincoln-Douglas debate pedagogically unique? First, as Timothy M. Miller and Tim Sommers argue, the principles of persuasion are at the heart of L-D debate:

> An L-D debater stands alone; he creates his own case, presents it, and defends it alone. His only defenses are his understanding, his intelligence, and his wit. An L-D debater analyzes and communicates, he does not follow a complex set of rules, only those of reason and human values. He does not debate vague matters of political policy, he argues about the values he lives by.[9]

In short, L-D debate is focused on the art of the argument and does not allow for many of the tactics employed by team debaters. Case blocks, theory-centered time vacuums, and negative spreads become increasingly difficult and inappropriate, and one finds it undeniably impossible to rely on the strength of a partner to gain victory. The winner of a Lincoln-Douglas debate is the one who can, as Otto Lerbinger notes, "appeal to both intellect and feeling. . . to obtain some kind of psychological consent from the person who is being persuaded."[10] Miller and Sommers observe that "pure reason does not win men's hearts, understanding does."[11] The one-versus-one exercise is concerned with <u>evidence</u> and not with <u>cards</u>, and, consequently, it is impossible to "strategize" a round or "out-process" an opponent and still be within the boundaries

of the event's creators. Thus, L-D debate is both worthwhile and distinctive because of its attention to the nature and presentation of the analysis as well as to the argument itself.

Likewise, time constraints required by Lincoln-Douglas debate significantly restrict the number of options open to competitors. In 1990, the National Forensic Association (NFA) added Lincoln-Douglas debate to their national tournament as an experimental event and published the following format:

Affirmative Constructive	6 minutes
Cross-examination	3 minutes
Negative Construction	8 minutes
Cross-examination	3 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	3 minutes
Negative Rebuttal	4 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	3 minutes
Preparation time	4 minutes[12]

Although this is a slight deviation from that which generally has been recognized as the norm for L-D (6-3-7-3-4-6-3), the notion that the competitors have relatively little time to advance their arguments is just as apparent. A negative speaker cannot spend precious time offering a list of resolutional interpretation positions and neglect direct clash and negative case building, especially when there is only one constructive speech. Further, as Fryar

and Thomas observe, "rebuttal speeches assume their historical purpose of extension and clarification, . . . [and] cross-examination skills become proportionately more important to the outcome of the debate."[13] The debaters must proficiently and efficiently organize and analyze the content of the round to determine the most cogent positions.

The final, and perhaps most compelling, distinction between Lincoln-Douglas and two-person debate regards the use of evidence. As previously indicated, L-D is intended to focus on persuasion and analysis rather than on massive amounts of data, or "cards." Early advocates of Lincoln-Douglas debate on the high school level, for example, mandated a twenty-card, four-source limit with an emphasis on "hard evidence" (facts, figures, statistics, expert testimony) or information one could "reason back from" (quotations from famous individuals).[14] Fryar and Thomas simply argue that "the emphasis is on analysis rather than evidence,"[15] and the NFA-NIET invitation dictates that "evidence should be used to support argumentative positions, not as a substitute for analysis."[16] In addition, NFA requires that debaters "cite full sources for their evidence the first time they present a source."[17] If information is used, it must be within the framework of ethical considerations, and is secondary to the argument itself. Hence, a definition of proof in Lincoln-Douglas debate should be consistent with the explanation of evidence

proposed by Thomas B. Harte in Introduction to Debate: "Statements of fact and opinion offered by speakers in an attempt to produce or reinforce in their auditors belief in a claim."[18]

Extemporaneous Lincoln-Douglas Debate: A Rationale

Many scholars contend that extemporaneous speaking is one of the most desirable pedagogical tools in contemporary forensics.[19] Undeniably, the skills learned and practiced in the event encompass many of the ideals essential for one to be a competent public speaker. Roger C. Aden and Jack Kay note a diversity of skills needed to be competitive in extemporaneous speaking:

> After all, success in this event requires contestants to understand complicated subjects of worldly importance, to analyze and synthesize, and to display their intellectual wares by powerfully and persuasively presenting their judgements to a myriad of critical listeners.[20]

Likewise, teachers of the basic speech course commonly demand that speakers utilize an extemporaneous mode of delivery. Harte, Keefe, and Derryberry argue that "every person who aspires to be a commanding speaker" should study extemporaneous delivery[21] and Mudd and Sillars contend that "extemporaneous delivery has the greatest number of advantages and the fewest disadvantages."[22] Accordingly, extemporaneous speaking is seen not only as a valuable event

for intercollegiate competition, but also as a sound learning tool.

As a competitive event, however, extemporaneous speaking is arguably in keeping with many of the principles intended for Lincoln-Douglas debate. With only 30 minutes to prepare, extemporaneous speakers are certainly constrained by time, and, consequently, must be able to focus only on that material which is relevant to the chosen thesis. In addition, since the relatively short preparation time allows for such a concise amount of research with limited memory recall, the extemporaneous speaker must rely on strong analysis with good examples, flawless logic, and convincing delivery. Finally, as is also true for Lincoln-Douglas debate, extemporaneous speaking is a step above information processing: each example, quotation, statistic, and study is secondary to the argument. In brief, for neither the extemporaneous speaker nor the L-D debater can evidence stand alone.

Extemporaneous Lincoln-Douglas Debate: A Recommendation

The logical conclusion, then, is for there to be a synthesis of Lincoln-Douglas debate and extemporaneous speaking that highlights the objectives of each and creates a new, more pedagogically advantageous challenge for both student and coach. While very little, if any, has been written regarding extemporaneous L-D,[23] the concept of extemporaneous debate is certainly not new,[24] and

extemporaneous Lincoln-Douglas debate has been offered at a small number of tournaments. The Pi Kappa Delta National Tournament, for example, offered extemporaneous L-D debate at their 1987 meeting at the University of Wisconsin--La Crosse. Although an experimental event, with 50 entries it was able to remain competitive with both Open and Novice CEDA,[25] a fact which may lend credence to advocacy of experimentation on a broader scale.

As the name indicates, extemporaneous Lincoln-Douglas debate incorporates the limited preparation, topic choice, and research methodology of extemporaneous speaking, and the time format and persuasive intent of Lincoln-Douglas debate. The 1987 Pi Kappa Delta National Convention and Contest Rules offer a possible foundation on which to begin (enumeration has been added for clarity):[26]

1. Topics will be drawn from issues of current national and/or international interest and may be worded to reflect either value or policy concerns.
2. Thirty minutes prior to the start of each round, competitors will be given two possible topics for debate.
3. Following a coin flip, the winner may choose to select either the topic to be debated or side of the topic to defend. The winner of

the coin flip may request that the loser of the flip make the initial choice.

4. Contestants may prepare by referring to any files they may have access to but may not confer with other contestants or non-contestants.

5. New topics will be used for each round. No topics will be used twice.

In addition, speaking formats are recommended to be either the traditional 6-3-7-3-4-6-3 time periods or, for the sake of uniformity, the 6-3-8-3-3-4-3 schedule adopted by the National Forensic Association.

Practically speaking, however, extemporaneous Lincoln-Douglas debate adds very little logistic difficulty to tournament preparation. No additional rooms are needed, and educated individuals with little or no debate experience can be utilized as judges. In the mid 1980's Bob Derryberry and Bill Randles of Southwest Baptist University designed and marketed a ballot expressly for extemporaneous Lincoln-Douglas debate (see Appendix A for sample). The evaluative criteria include organization, advocacy of affirmative or negative position, use of support, reasoning, refutation, and verbal/nonverbal communication. In addition, the adjudicator has ample space in which to write critical comments.

Conclusion

Intercollegiate speech and debate is currently in a position to make alterations that will influence competitive practices for a number of years. "CEDA" style and "NDT" style have become nearly indistinguishable, and, although serving a function, they have alienated a significant portion of hopeful participants. This discussion has attempted to analyze the original intent of Lincoln-Douglas debate and offer, as an alternative to current practices, the fusion of extemporaneous speaking with L-D to create a pedagogically superior event.

Notes

1. Bob R. Derryberry, "The Nature of the 'Total' Forensic Program: The 1990's and Beyond," National Forensic Journal 9 (1991): 19-29.

2. See Rita Kirk Whillock, "The Practice of Theory: A Controversy in Current Debate," Forensic 76.3 (1991): 6-14.

3. James J. Lewis and Janet K. Larsen, "Inter-rater Judge Agreement in Forensic Competition," Journal of the American Forensic Association 18 (1981): 9.

4. Roger C. Aden and Jack Kay, "Improving the Educational Value of Extemporaneous Speaking: Refocusing the Question," National Forensic Journal 6 (1988): 43.

5. Seth Hawkins, ed., Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results (New Haven, CT: Great Eastern Forensic Services, 1991).

6. Maridell Fryar and David A. Thomas, Student Congress and Lincoln-Douglas Debate (Skokie, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1981) 1.

7. Fryar and Thomas 1.

8. Fryar and Thomas 3.

9. Timothy M. Miller and Tim Sommers, "Lincoln-Douglas Debate is 'Debate'," Rostrum 57.5 (1983): 10.

10. Otto Lerbinger, Designs for Persuasive Communication (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1972) 3.

11. Miller and Sommers 10.

12. National Forensic Association, Invitation to National Individual Events Tournament, 1990.

13. Fryar and Thomas 7.

14. Timothy M. Miller and Tim Sommers, "The Affirmative Case with a Discussion on Evidence and Reasoning," Rostrum 57.8 (1983): 5-6.

15. Fryar and Thomas 4.

16. Invitation 2.

17. Invitation 2.

18. Carolyn Keefe, Thomas B. Harte, and Laurence E. Norton, eds., Introduction to Debate (New York: Macmillan, 1982) 101.

19. Don F. Faules, Richard D. Rieke, and Jack Rhodes, Directing Forensics: Debate and Contest Speaking, 2nd ed. (Denver: Morton, 1976): 209.

20. Roger C. Aden and Jack Kay, "Improving the Educational Value of Extemporaneous Speaking: Refocusing the Question," National Forensic Journal 6 (1988): 43.

21. Thomas B. Harte, Carolyn Keefe, and Bob Derryberry, The Complete Book of Speechwriting for Students and Professionals, 2nd ed. (Edina, MN: Bellwether-Burgess International, 1988) 8.

22. Charles S. Mudd and Malcolm O. Sillars, Public Speaking: Content and Communication, 6th ed. (Prospect Heights: Waveland P, 1991) 282.

23. Informal interviews with tournament hosts who annually offer Lincoln-Douglas debate as an individual event generally produce answers such as, "Gee, it's always been done that way," or, "I'm not sure that we have a good reason."

24. See Stuart Olds and Kenneth Sajdak, "The Experiment of Extempore Debate," Forensic 57.2 (1972): 11-14.

25. Pi Kappa Delta Official National Tournament Results, 1987.

26. Official Convention and Contest Rules, Pi Kappa Delta National Convention and Tournament, 1987.

Appendix A